

Following up with Parents

A GUIDE FOR SCHOOL AND CHILD CARE STAFF

It is the responsibility of school and child care staff to follow up on all children needing future immunizations. Schools also need to follow up on transfer students when awaiting arrival of records from prior schools. This means that every school and child care facility must develop a follow-up system and employ it consistently.



The first key to success is being very clear with parents or guardians and that you must enforce the law and the basic rule of “No Shots, No Records, No School!”

Your follow-up system should include:

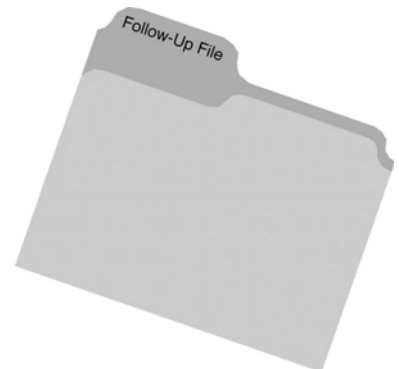
1. **Keeping a list of exempt children to refer to in case of disease outbreak.**
2. **Reviewing your records monthly** (see System 1-3 below).
3. **Using the shortest interval to complete immunizations** (Accelerated Schedule) is encouraged. For example, when a conditionally admitted child is in the 6 to 12 month interval between doses of DTaP, target the 6 month date as your deadline. Notify the parents of the deadline 6 months after the previous dose, rather than waiting for the maximum 12 months to elapse.
4. **Keeping in contact with parents.** Provide parents with the *Guide to the Requirements of the Idaho School Immunization Law for Grades K-1*, or *Guide to the Requirements of the Idaho Day Care Law*. If immunizations are needed, parents should be sent a notice of immunizations needed at the beginning of the month in which shots or records are due (the Idaho Immunization Program has a sample letter available for duplication). An exclusion date of no more than 10 school days after the deadline date should be assigned and noted on the letter. If the parent or guardian does not come in with a record from a physician or health provider, the law requires that the child (unless exempt) be excluded from further school/child care attendance until proof of adequate immunization is presented.
5. **Excluding children who do not meet requirements by your deadline.** Almost all parents comply with requirements when they know their child must be excluded. It is unlikely that you will ever need to actually exclude a child. However, the letter to parents and the documentation of your follow-up efforts provide the information you need for due process.
6. For schools, make sure cumulative folders are forwarded to new schools within 30 days.

FOLLOW-UP SYSTEMS

Described below are three systems currently in use in various schools and child care facilities. Choose whichever system is best for you.

SYSTEM 1 – HEALTH FORM FOLDER

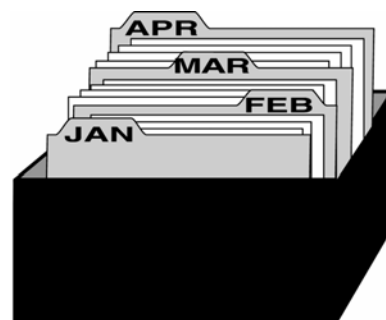
- Keep a separate file of the Blue (school) or Green (child care) Idaho School/Child Care Health Forms of children needing follow-up. For schools make sure that the form is transferred with the cumulative file if the child changes schools.
- Clip a note with the due date onto the health folder.
- At the beginning of each month, call or send parents a letter to remind them that shots are due and of the deadline date. Assign an exclusion date of no more than 10 school days after your deadline date.
- Enter immunization dates onto the Health Form when the doctor or clinic record is presented by parents to verify the child's immunization status.
- Repeat the steps above if additional immunizations will be needed in the future, until all requirements are met.



- Exclude students who do not provide evidence of up-to-date immunizations by the exclusion date.
- When no additional vaccine doses are needed, remove the child's Health Form from the follow-up file and return it to the student's cumulative file or the child care file for that child.
- When waiting for another school to send a cumulative folder and immunization record or Blue Health Form, include in the follow-up file a blank Health Form with a note with the child's name attached to it. Identify on the note the deadline date for receipt of the record from the prior school (within the student's first 30 days at your school). When the cumulative record arrives from the sending school, review the Blue Health Form to make sure all required immunizations have been received. Below the Documentation Box, indicate this review was done. If the transfer student is from out-of-state, complete a new Blue Health Form. (Note: When students leave your school, forward the cumulative folder with the Health Form to the new school in a timely manner.)

SYSTEM 2 – INDEX CARD FILE

- A card file requires 3"x 5" index cards, a box to hold them, and a set of month index cards (January-December).
- For a child needing future immunizations, enter his or her name on an index card and list all doses which will be needed. Using the *Guide to the Requirements of the Idaho School Immunization Law for Grades K-1*, or *Guide to the Requirements of the Idaho Day Care Law* determine when the next dose is due and note the deadline date on the upper right-hand corner of the follow-up card.
- For a child whose immunization record is in transit from another school, enter the child's name and the 30-day deadline date in the upper right-hand corner of the follow-up card.
- File each follow-up card by the month the immunization or transfer record is due.
- At the beginning of each month, call or send parents a letter to remind them that shots are due and of the deadline date. Assign an exclusion date of no more than 10 school days after the due date. Be sure to document on the index card the date the notice was sent.
- Enter immunization dates on the Green or Blue Health Form when the doctor or clinic record is presented by parents to verify the child's immunization status.
- Repeat the steps above if additional immunizations will be needed in the future until all requirements are met.
- Exclude children who do not provide evidence of up-to-date immunizations by the exclusion date.
- When no more immunizations are needed, remove the card from the file box.



SYSTEM 2 – CALENDAR

- A **calendar** system may work well in a group or family child care facility or in a small school or center. Use a calendar with large spaces for each day to note the name of the child on the day an immunization is due. To preserve confidentiality, the calendar should not be hung where it is visible to parents or the public.

